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Successful anaesthesia of this type calls for the utmost precision in carrying out orders and the most careful observation on the part of the nurses entrusted with the care of these patients.

LEGAL STANDARDS FOR DRUGS

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THE Pure Food and Drug Act which was passed in 1907 states in Section 6 "that the term 'drug,' as used in this Act, shall include all medicines and preparations recognized in the United States Pharmacopeia or National Formulary for internal or external use, and any substance or mixture of substances intended to be used for the cure, mitigation or prevention of disease of either man or other animals."

This official definition of the word "drug" established as legal standards two books, the Pharmacopeia and Formulary, which for many years have been published by medical and pharmaceutical societies for the purpose of maintaining some degree of uniformity and standardization of drugs throughout the country.

The United States Pharmacopeia (U. S. P.) is a book of about six hundred pages containing detailed descriptions of important medicinal chemicals and crude drugs and directions for making various pharmaceutical preparations. The selection of the drugs and preparations to be included in the Pharmacopeia is made on the basis of their known value as medicines and their necessity in pharmacy.

The development of the present form of the Pharmacopeia has been most interesting. In 1778 a book of this nature was published in Philadelphia for the use of the United States army; in 1805 a similar one was brought out by the Massachusetts Medical Society to meet the needs of that locality, and in 1815 the physicians and surgeons of the New York Hospital in New York City arranged for the publication of a hospital pharmacopeia which came to have a fairly wide distribution. All of these books were largely collections of prescriptions which were of established value and in general local use.

In 1820, through the efforts of the New York County Medical Society, a general convention of delegates from state medical colleges and medical societies met in Washington, D. C., to formulate a comprehensive pharmacopeia adapted for use in all sections of the country. The book appeared, the first national pharmacopeia of the United States, that same year. It was a publication of 272 pages, printed in both Latin and English. In 1830, through misunderstandings, two

pharmacopeias were published, one in New York and one in Philadelphia. The convention of 1840 abolished Latin and adopted a definite plan for future revisions. In 1860 the convention included for the first time regularly appointed delegates from the government and from pharmaceutical organizations. In 1890 the metric system was adopted.

The pharmacopeial convention is now a corporation of delegates which meets on each decennial at Washington, D. C. Each of the following bodies is entitled to three delegates: incorporated schools and colleges of medicine and pharmacy, incorporated state medical and pharmaceutical societies, the American Medical Association, the American Pharmaceutical Association, the American Chemical Society, the United States Army and Navy and the United States Public Health Service. At the convention the general changes to be adopted in the new edition are decided upon and a committee of fifty appointed to carry out the actual work of the revision. The new book appears usually about five years after the pharmacopeial convention.

The present revision, the ninth, is the first since the book was made a legal authority and was necessarily very thorough to avoid, if possible, defects and loopholes in definitions and directions which could be taken advantage of by violators of the law. It became official on September 1st, 1916.

At the last pharmacopeial convention held in May, 1920, an important change in the general policy of selection of drugs for the Pharmacopeia was adopted, namely, to empower the revision committee to admit proprietary articles of proved value which are of known composition and which can be accurately standardized. The revision committee now at work is composed of thirty-three members representing pharmacy and seventeen representing medicine. So much of the preliminary work of the tenth revision was accomplished at the time of the convention that the new book is expected to appear in two or three years.

The National Formulary (N. F.) is a smaller book than the Pharmacopeia published by the American Pharmaceutical Association every ten years immediately after each revision of the Pharmacopeia. The present revision is the fourth. It contains drugs and formulae which are not considered important enough to be included in the Pharmacopeia, but which are still in common use and need standardization.

All the drugs and preparations included in these two books, the Pharmacopeia and Formulary, are said to be "official." When a physician prescribes an official remedy he can be reasonably sure that it is pure, of high standard and of known and constant composi-

tion if it is possible to be obtained. It is a fact, however, that many physicians and nurses have a very slight acquaintance with these books and do not realize the desirability of official remedies over patent and proprietary preparations which have no supervised standards and many of which are unknown in composition. Copies of the Pharmacopeia and Formulary can be found in any medical library and in every pharmacy and even a fifteen-minute perusal would give one a general idea of their contents. To encourage and facilitate familiarity with these books among physicians the American Medical Association has published a book called "Epitome of the United States Pharmacopeia and National Formulary" which sells at the small cost of fifty cents and is a most convenient reference book on the official drugs and their preparations.

The United States Pharmacopeia is translated into Spanish and recent authorization has been given for translation into Chinese. All civilized nations now have their own national pharmacopeias, but they vary so much that a prescription written by an American physician, for example, put up according to a foreign pharmacopeia might yield a medicine radically different from the one intended. In an attempt to remedy this situation an International Conference for the Unification of Formulas for Potent Remedies was held in Brussels in 1902. It was attended by delegates from all parts of the world and several recommendations formulated at that time have been very generally adopted. The most important of these was that all potent tinctures be ten per cent in strength and all fluid extracts be one hundred per cent. Several unofficial international pharmacopeias have been prepared which give a comparative digest of the material contained in all the important national pharmacopeias and there is a strong tendency toward uniformity.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DEANS OF WOMEN

This Association has recently published its ninth Annual Report. The papers on the Construction and Management of Dormitories contain much that should interest those who are planning nurses' homes. Blanche Geary of the National Y. W. C. A., writing on "Certain governing conditions in the preparation of floor plans for dormitories for women students," has the following to say on "Privacy": "The specialist on floor plans for halls of residence for women, whether students or wage earners in the business or professional world, having in mind their need for conditions making for perfect health, cannot afford to overlook the connection between crowd-nerves and the prevalent absence of privacy. Lacking teachers, classrooms are crowded; lacking houses, homelife is crowded * * * Membership in the Association of Deans of Women would seem to have much to offer the directors of our university schools of nurses. The secretary is Dean Florence K. Root, Pennsylvania College for Women, Pittsburgh, Pa.